Organic tea market

4263. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the comparative demand of organic and inorganic tea *vis-a-vis* Indian position as well as competitors in the world market;

(b) the steps taken and achievements made so far in exploring the potential of organic tea market as well as to link up Indian productivity to capture the future world market;

(c) the action taken by Government to support the small tea growers togetherwith the State-wise assistance granted and specific support extended during each of the last three years; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken in future in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) The organic tea was introduced to the world market in the mid 1980s. Over the past decade, its consumption has grown by more than 10% per year globally. However, in volume terms, the trading in organic tea is very insignificant when compared to the black tea. India is the leading producer of both non organic as well as organic tea in the world, the entire Indian production of organic tea is exported. The major destinations are UK, Germany, USA and Japan. The other major organic tea producing and exporting countries of the world are Sri Lanka and China. The major competitors of India in total tea exports are Sri Lanka, Kenya, China and Indonesia.

(b) to (d) At present, there are 42 tea gardens in the country that have taken up organic tea cultivation in an area of 6000 hectares and the current production level is around 3.5 million kgs which marks an increase of twenty fold over ten years' period, with the production in 1990 being only 0.15 million kgs. National standards for organic products have been formulated and Tea board has been designated as the accreditation agency for tea. The Tea Board has also submitted a project proposal through the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), aimed at development of technology and system of organic tea production by setting up model organic farms, for funding by the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC). Financial assistance is also being provided by Tea Board for imparting training on organic methods of cultivation.

At present there are no certified small growers in the organic tea sector. However, Tea Board's training programmes for development of organic tea cultivation will also cover small growers in due course.

Ban on Indian meat

4264. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian meat has been banned by Egypt. Jordan, Kuwait and other countries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government have taken or propose to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) to (b) Presently there is no ban on import of Indian meat by Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait. However no exports are taking place to Indonesia, South Africa and Saudi Arabia which are insisting on import only from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) free Area.

(c) Government continues its efforts to appropriately advise the concerned authorities of the major importing countries in this regard.

Trade links between India and Canada

4265. SHRI KALRAJMISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Canadian Trade Delegation has visited India recently and held discussions with him;

(b) if so, the details of points discussed by the delegation;

(c)whether trade links between both the countries have further improved;

(d) if so, to what extent; and

(e) the benefits likely to accrue to India with Canadian firms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Mr. pierre Pettigrew, Canadian Minister for International Trade accompanied by a large